Claims 1-9 are pending in this application and stand rejected under 35 USC § 102 as

being anticipated by WO 01/34240 to Hancock et al. Reconsider of this application is requested

in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

The Hancock et al patent discloses a vascular catheter with a transition member on the

distal shaft portion bridging the first stiffness and the second stiffness. Hancock does not

disclose the specific stiffness of the transition member with respect to the proximal and distal

shafts and the stent mounted on the balloon. While Hancock et al notes the overall stiffness and

the changes in the stiffness along the length of the catheter, it does not specifically teach or

disclose the specific stiffness of the transition members with respect to the other catheter shafts

and the stent mounted on the balloon. Applicant has amended the independent claims to require

that the transition member have a stiffness intermediate that of the proximal and distal shafts, but

less than the stent mounted on the balloon or intravascular device on the distal catheter shaft.

Support for the amendment is found in the specification at page 7, lines 15-17 and page 7, line

29-page 8, line 1. Accordingly, each and every element required in Applicant's claim is not

disclosed in the Hancock el at patent and thus the rejection must be withdrawn.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant believes all the pending claims are in condition for

allowance and should be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference

would in any way expedite the prosecution of the application, please do not hesitate to call the

undersigned at telephone (707) 543-0221.

Respectfully submitted,

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